



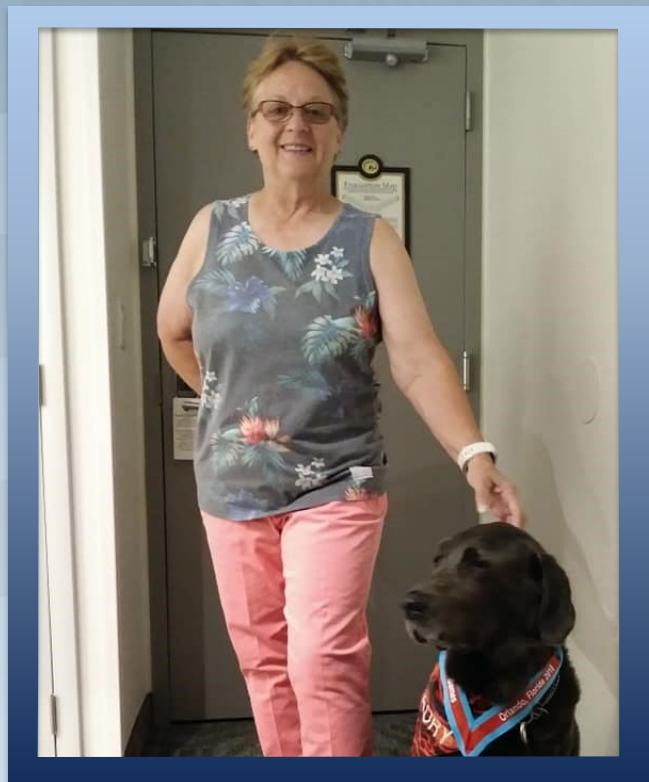
Success Stories

Healthy Living Matters. Prevention Works.

Arresting Her Weight Gain

AS A 10-YEAR AIR FORCE LAW ENFORCEMENT VETERAN, CAROLYN BARNES WAS USED TO BEING IN TOP CONDITION.

But when she quit smoking, Carolyn gained weight and struggled to take it off. Then a family emergency made her realize it was time for a change. With the help of her Cleveland-based Louis Stokes Medical Center VA MOVE! team, Carolyn lost 35 pounds!



When did you first struggle with your weight?

"I have always prided myself for being in great physical condition. Well, 10 years ago, I quit smoking because 'extending your life for 10 years' seemed more important at 50 than at 20. So I quit.

"But it was not without negative effects. I gained 60 pounds. It seemed no matter what I did, I could not drop the weight. So I just resigned myself to the fact that I was going to be old and fat.

"The past few years, during my annual physicals, my VA doctor would ask me if I was interested in the MOVE! Program. After she explained what MOVE! was, I would decline, thinking, 'I'm not *that* bad.'"

What changed your mind?

“Last year, my older brother had a heart attack and a double bypass. The doctor told my sister and me that our brother needed to lose 100 pounds. I remember thinking, ‘I’m heading there!’

“So last year at my annual physical, when my doctor asked if I wanted to sign up for the MOVE! Program, I answered, ‘YES!’ without hesitation.”

How was your MOVE! experience?

“I started my 16-week (Tuesday Women’s) program in November 2017 at 187 pounds. I had received a Fitbit for my birthday a few months earlier and began keeping track of not only my steps but my daily consumption.

“The more goals and changes I made, the pounds just started dropping off 2 and 3 at a time. Mostly, just applying the simple basic idea that you have to burn more calories than you consume to lose weight.”

Did you meet your goals?

“I am happy to report that I lost 35 pounds and went from a size 16 pants to a size 10/12. I had a New Years goal of 30 pounds, which I met, but I also had a goal of getting down to 150 pounds by late July, which I missed by 2 pounds! My MOVE! clinic ended in March, but I continued to drop a few more pounds. Maintaining weight is also a measure of success!”

“I have more energy—
and I have more fun
shopping for clothes
now!”

– Carolyn Barnes



What advice do you have for other Veterans struggling with weight?

“There are so many health problems [due] to obesity. Get in better shape while you can, and cut down the chances of heart attacks, strokes, or diabetes in your old age.

“And keep moving!”